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A  
COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF THE

A D V A N T A G E S

RESULTING FROM

R E V E L A T I O N ;

AND THE

DANGERS ATTENDING INFIDELITY.

A D D R E S S E D

*To the* P E O P L E *of* I R E L A N D .

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By the Rev. EUGENE MARTIN.

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MDCCCLXXIX.





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## P R E F A C E.

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**O**F all Christian Duties there is none of more importance to mankind than that of defending Religion against those violent assaults and insolent reproaches to which divine Providence, in his wisdom, leaves it exposed. By this mean, errors of various kinds are totally extinguished ;

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guished ; the laws of nations more firmly established ; the true doctrine of grace faithfully preserved ; obedience to the judgments of the Church enforced ; the illusions of false mysteries dissipated and the progress of unsound morality checked before it can arrive at the period of maturity.

The doctrines, now attacked by the enemies of Religion, are more numerous than those of ancient times. Infidelity, at present, exerts her influence in nothing more than in wresting from mankind the treasure of their most sacred truths.

Abandoned

Abandoned and destitute of all respect, she sets no bounds to her destructive genius. Degenerate writers, uniting under her banner, like those strange nations, which had formerly conspired the ruin of the people of God, seem, by their unhallowed productions, determined to extirpate from the face of the earth the name even of the most HIGH.

I do not, however, purpose to direct your thoughts entirely to those victorious proofs, which are daily handled in favor of Religion ; neither do I pretend to answer the vain sophisms of impiety, nor discuss with her every minutest article of

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our belief. Wishing to confine myself within a narrower sphere, in order to accommodate this work to the ability of all, I have attempted to confound the doctrine of infidelity by those vices only to which she peculiarly gives rise. Yet, if we believe the principles of her advocates, her sole object leads to no other end, but that of enlightening the understanding and rendering it more susceptible of every social enjoyment. But fierce, when she attacks, and timid, when obliged to defend herself, she gradually unmask her imposture, as soon as we begin to judge her by her effects, and compare the weakness

ness

ness of her means with the apparent grandeur of her projects.

This is the only point of view to which I have confined the subject of my present undertaking. The great advantages, which, they say, result from infidelity, and the superior knowledge of which they so vainly boast, are mere illusions, that vanish like the visions of a night. Instead of elevating man above the common level, she only degrades and renders him inglorious. Instead of being useful to him, she only imbitters the cup of happiness, unties the bonds of society, saps the founda-

tions of morality, overturns the laws of subordination and publick tranquillity. On the contrary, nothing can be more evident than that our dearest interests are connected with the support of Religion ; that without her benign interposition, we can have neither an adequate knowledge of our duties, nor strength enough to reduce them into practice ; that our imperfections, our weaknesses, which we but too often experience within ourselves, announce the advantages, nay, the necessity of a Revelation.

If these general reflections suffice not to resolve all the doubts, to which infidelity



lity hath given birth, they will, at least, lay open the emptiness, the vanity of her promises, throw light on the extent of her alarming dangers, and inspire us with courage to fly the contagion of her principles.

The many excellent and justly applauded treatises written in defence of revealed Religion, greatly encrease the difficulty of every new attempt of the like nature. But it is hoped, that the admirers of pieces, whose reputation is already established, will not be void of candor towards a writer,

writer, who, though deeply conscious of inferiority, breathes the same spirit, and cannot refrain from endeavouring to contribute his mite to the same noble and important purposes.

Should this essay prove, in the least, too solemn ; should any traces of stoical severity appear in the Author's reflections, some excuse is certainly to be made for an honest zeal, alarmed at the general prevalence and inattention, and strongly prompted to bear a vigorous testimony to truth and virtue, in an age, when the science as well as the practice of Religion

is

is reduced to so low a state, that many  
seem to account it an object altogether  
imaginary, vain and chimerical.

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referred to as low a level, that many  
seem to account it as a child together  
imaginary and childish

M. O. M.

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**COMPARATIVE VIEW, &c.**

**N**OTHING can be of greater advantage to mankind than the knowledge of Truth. Human opinions vary as indifferently as the minds which form them. The truths of Religion, on the contrary, acquire a stability, which cannot be opposed with safety. They are truths of a superior order, on which both our temporal

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and

and eternal happiness depend : Truths, which are the basis of every social and religious interest, and which exert their influence on every action of our lives. For if man be ignorant of what he ought to think of the Deity, of the nature of his soul, of the duties he ought to practise, and the end to which the whole tenor of his life ought ever to be adjusted, how can he regulate his life and actions ? The multitude, at least, whose sphere of considerations is very narrow, cannot be left destitute of instruction. For if the mists of ignorance and prejudice once darkened the powers of their understanding, they would immediately become fertile of invention, and fables and superstitious notions would consequently follow, as the effects of a strayed and vitiated fancy.

Impiety, which so much affects to dread the consequences of religious truths, will not, however, dare to contest these principles. But if it be certain, that man can no longer remain  
doubtful



doubtful of these truths, why do not unbelievers deign to build something in place of that edifice, which they wish, in vain, to pull down? Do they imagine, that, to establish certainty, it suffices to propose doubts and objections without end? Do they think to diffuse light around, by spreading universal darkness? Have not the most evident truths their difficulties, their abyss; and do we not daily find opponents, who, with all the subtilty and variety of distinctions, exert every art to render them intricate and obscure? The Unbeliever himself, does he pretend that his doctrine is exempt from cavil? The Atheist, who, notwithstanding the imperfections and changes of the world, supposes it eternal: The Materialist, who confounds all beings, and is deaf to that internal sentiment, which admonishes him of the simplicity of his soul and her freedom of deliberation: The Epicurean, who dares to mistake that order, that harmony, which reigns so conspicuously throughout the universe; |

who doubts of divine providence, and believes that the same God, who created man, disdains to govern and impart to him his benefits : The Libertine, who, against the cry of conscience, says : *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die* : \* The Deist, whose exorbitant pride rejects the testimony of prophets, and opposes the irresistible conviction of miracles : do all those, in short, who deny any of the truths of the christian religion, think they have no intricacies to unravel ? Nature herself is big with enigmas, and obscurities. Infidelity, on the contrary, far from enlightening the human mind, only loads it with difficulties to perplex its powers. It would be necessary, besides, to oppose proof to proof, to discuss testimonies and establish a doctrine, contrary to that, which she endeavours to destroy. If methodical doubt be said to lead always to the knowledge of truth, a real and permanent one must consequently take an opposite direction, and when

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\* Isaiah, ch. XXII, v. 13.

left to vibrate between these two alternatives, our situation immediately becomes deplorable.

This is, likewise, the opinion of some unbelievers. They clearly perceive that this apparent desire of inculcating that humanity, of which they are so vain, could never be reconciled with the frightful picture of the world, abandoned to itself without laws, without principles : and that wrecks and ruins could never support the venerable throne of truth and virtue. But what has been the consequence of all their complicated schemes ? The ancient philosophers present us only with a boundless field of variety and contradiction. “ If I could “ believe,” said Lactantius, “ that they were “ guides capable of conducting me, I would “ follow them with pleasure ; but as each assumes to himself the privilege of choosing his “ own way, how can they point me out that “ which I ought to follow ?” †

On

† Lactantius on false religion. Book 1, No. 1.



On objects the most essential to mankind, such as the belief of a God, the nature of the soul, and that of the sovereign good, there has been as great a variety of opinions, as there have been of schools. Each made it his glory to support a system, which he thought would distinguish him in the eyes of the public, or attract the notice of the learned. The general conclusion, which one of the brightest luminaries of antiquity drew from this fatal division, was, that all was doubtful and uncertain: "The Gods," said Plato, "have reserved the truth to themselves, and have left to man only the semblance of it." †

Our modern unbelievers disagree not less among themselves than the ancient philosophers. Divided on the first principles of our actions, on the extent of our duties, on the influence of vice and virtue, on the nature of the

† Plato's critical history of philosophy, vol. 2.

the passions, on the authority of laws, natural as well as civil, they are become incapable of establishing any one fixed point of rest amidst their general fluctuation ; and if any even among them have arrived at the truth of certain objects, yet their ideas of them are so diffuse, as to be incapable of distribution or review. They have never yet been able to digest them into a code of doctrine, which would be necessary in order to become useful to society. One of them thought lately to have formed a complete system of infidelity† ; but will it daily meet with opponents even among those, who seem to unite with the author in opposing every moral and religious principle : his rash and sacrilegious expressions will be contradicted by others, who have condemned and refuted them before hand ; so far is it true, that error is always changeable and inconsistent, ever tending to destroy itself. It seems that God has dealt with these sages of impiety, who have  
most

† Author of the System of Nature.

most grossly abused his essence and decrees, as with those madmen, who undertook to raise a tower to the Heavens in order to escape the divine vengeance †. He has delivered them over to ignorance, to uncertainty, to the confusion of their ideas; and they have left no other lasting monument behind them, but the rude traces of a blind and extravagant folly.

But what can we conclude from this variety of opinions, this variety of systems? If, in a well regulated state, a man should rise up and say to the inhabitants, “ This form of government, which secures both your person and  
 “ property, is founded on doubtful, on precarious principles, on prejudices and errors;  
 “ until you renounce them, you will be only  
 “ aggravating your misfortunes, you will be  
 “ only whetting the edge of your own misery.” If, at the same time, this pretended legislator proposed neither laws nor regulations,  
 nor

† Gen. XI. 4, 5, 6, &c.



nor announced any other form of government, but vague and unconnected ideas, who would dare say, he consulted the good of his country? This is, however, the effect of infidelity, and far from being able to form any system of laws, advantageous to humanity, her baneful influence carries with it both war and devastation. She exerts every nerve to take away the rule of our conduct, which ought to be our guide, without leaving in its stead even a phantom to support us. And if, like the Phosphorus, which shines only in the darkest nights, she sometimes scatters in the midst of her own gloom, a transient gleam of light, it quickly vanishes and disappears, and leaves man, whom she has seduced, in a more profound and frightful obscurity.

To this systematical defect, let us oppose the sublime doctrine of Jesus Christ. Far from being composed of any confused or uncertain notions, of superficial or progressive knowledge,

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of false lustre, or deceitful appearances, which only by intervals enlighten or fascinate the mind; on the contrary, all its parts are so closely connected, as to borrow mutual strength, and are upheld by necessary relations. Here are to be seen no barren, no unmeaning truths. Moses and Jesus Christ, the old and new covenants, the patriarchs, the prophets and the apostles unanimously concur in establishing one and the same object, and quote each other as irreproachable witnesses. There is no doctrine that does not influence the practice of precepts; no precept, which does not trace back or suppose the belief of doctrines, and the worship prescribed by God, is the true and solemn expression of both one and the other.

Every thing is so well connected in religion, that the edifice, which it forms, is not less remarkable for the multitude and richness of its parts than for its uniformity and solidity. The belief of one God, creator and redeemer, is the  
basis

basis of this supernatural structure. From this fruitful principle spring all the various duties of man, the rules, which direct the practice of them, the motives, which induce him to fulfil them, the means, with which Providence hath supplied him in order to be faithful to them, the rewards and punishments annexed to his fidelity and disobedience. Of what kind of aid or instruction does he stand in need, that religion holds not out immediately to his assistance? She clears up with pleasing satisfaction, all doubts concerning the Deity, and fully develops the different relations of man. There is no action in life, which she cannot direct and sanctify. She is adapted to all states, conditions and events : She comprehends both Heaven and earth, the past, the present and the future, time and eternity. Let unbelievers point out any set of principles, founded on human industry, so well connected in all its parts, so extensive, so universal. If they do, they must necessarily coincide with those of religion.

The



The ways of error are infinite ; but the path, which leads to truth, is simple and unvaried. He, who, in order to find it out, relies too much upon his own strength, is like an imprudent pilot, who, neglecting to read the line of his route, which he sees traced before him in the Heavens, soon becomes the sport of waves and storms, and blindly rushes into all the horrors of approaching ruin.

Reason, indeed, is one of those means, which God has given us to discern the truth ; but, like those beneficent waters, that human industry collects together in order to diffuse richness and abundance over the adjacent country, and which, bursting over their salutary mounds, deluge the neighbouring plains, converting them into scenes of terror and desolation, she strays, nay, hurries to destruction, if usurping the province of omniscience, she dare

dare break down those barriers, with which Providence had assigned her empire.

It is possible for human reason to be convinced of the existence of a supreme and intelligent Being. *The Heavens shew forth his glory, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands ; †* of the essential difference that exists between spirit and matter, our internal sentiment is more than sufficient to evince the reality ; of the distinction between moral good and evil, this is so deeply impressed on our minds and conscience, as to render it impossible to confound them. We are always charmed with the beauty of virtue, and disgusted with the deformity of vice. It is possible for human reason to know in part the duties, which man ought ever to be faithful in fulfilling : There are also many, which education, laws and interest clearly point out to him to follow. But when there is question of unfolding the attri-

butes

† Psalm XVIII. 1.

btes of the Deity, of reconciling the apparent imperfections of his works with the sublime perfection of his designs, of the unequal distribution of goods and talents with the universality of Providence: When there is question of explaining this double movement of the soul, whereby vice and virtue divide the empire of the mind, these various, these multiplied relations of man, which are also the principles of as many different duties, the harmony and variety of laws, which are imposed upon him: In short, when there is question of explaining the origin of these laws, the motives, by which they are upheld and the sanction, which accompanies them, it is then that human wisdom sinks into littleness and vanishes as the cloud before the sun. A flight tincture of philosophy, said a certain genius of his age, may separate us from God, whilst a profound knowledge of the same leads on to the conviction of religion;† and the great void, by which he  
fees

† Lord Bacon on the advancement of learning. Book 1.



sees himself surrounded, when wrapped in meditation, is the surest proof of the need he stands in of a superior power to enlighten and support him. Religion herself throws not off entirely the veil, which conceals from our view the secrets of Providence. We ought to say, with the apostle, that *we know but in part*,† and that *the judgments of the Lord are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out*.‡ To know all things and to comprehend their nature is not of the last importance to us; but to know that, which we ought to believe, and to know it to conviction. This is the twofold object, to which reason can never be reconciled. To him, who is solely guided by his understanding, an objection, which remains unsolved, renders the proof almost for ever uncertain; but to him, whose mind is enlightened by the torch of revelation, the superiority of the proof renders the objection, though not cleared

\* 1 Corinth, XIII. 12.

† Romans XI. 33.

cleared up in a manner level to human comprehension, both frivolous and vain. Reason has her boundaries marked out, beyond which, if she attempt to soar, she is lost in a maze of inextricable difficulties. She startles and is confounded at every thing that goes beyond the power of her capacity. Revelation, on the contrary, elevates our ideas, and knows no other limits, but those, which the dictates of prudence and religion teach us to respect. An innocent and docile heart hears her voice at once: the doubts and enquiries, which pride creates, so far from bringing her near us, shut the eyes against her light, she blinds with her mysteries the proudest sages and judges, and communicates herself to those only, who glory in being her disciples. Submission is the source of intelligence: the more we are determined to reason, the more we run astray; the more we doubt, the more God permitteth our doubts to increase. Reason once departed from  
rule

rule no longer meets with any thing to check her; the more she advances, the deeper are the precipices, which lie before her. Faith is the only anchor, which can fix the human mind; if we go beyond that, we enter into a region dreary and covered with the shadow of death: We have no longer any assured path-way; we see nothing in it but phantoms, the sad progeny of darkness and of error.

Thus even have the first Apologists of religion reproached the Pagans. Their censures were not extended to the people only, but also to the philosophers, whose systems of theology, according to Cicero, were as ridiculous as those of the poets, who composed the religion of the people.†

It is not, however, the purport of this tract to entertain you with matters, recorded so far back in the annals of antiquity. Our modern

D

Unbelievers

† Cicero, Lib. 1. de Nat. Deorum.



Unbelievers assume so great a superiority over past ages, as to baffle all description. But when there is question of certain truths, without the discernment of which, man cannot possibly conduct himself, is it not arraigning the empire of reason to boast of her progress? Essential knowledge cannot be at all times subjected to the slow advances and progressive vicissitudes of times and manners. If reason sufficed not heretofore to guide men in the way of truth, she must still be inadequate to that purpose; and those pretended discoveries, which Unbelievers attribute to her powers, can never repair the disgrace, which they are obliged to confess, the ravings of a depraved imagination brought on the generality of mankind.

But is it likewise true, that this boasted pre-eminence is so general, as they would fain to make us believe? If the arts and sciences have arrived at that towering perfection, unknown even to our ancestors, can the same be affirmed  
of

of metaphysics and morality? Is it true that our modern unbelievers themselves maintain such shameful absurdities, as make them blush in the eye of reason? To be ignorant of any other principle of obedience, but that of necessity; of any other rule of conduct, but that of self-interest; of any other agent, but that of a blind fatality; to look on modesty, as the daughter, or rather the invention of voluptuousness; on libertinism, as indifferent in itself; on vice, as the chief support of society; on sensual pleasures, as the most powerful incentives to encourage and animate virtue; boldly to deny the testimony of nature, the cry of conscience and the unanimous consent of nations, who pay homage to the Deity; these are such horrid blasphemies, as can be ascribed with difficulty to the human understanding. Must not Revelation be, therefore, necessary, if those, who reject her influence, are capable of falling into such errors?

It is not here insinuated, however, that the present age is given up to such erroneous principles. It must be allowed with infinite satisfaction, that the same inconsistencies with which the Fathers of the Church reproached the most brilliant æras of the Greeks and Romans, cannot be imputed to ours. But whether is it from reason, or the light of the gospel, that this wonderful revolution hath ensued? Unbelievers, said Tertullian, boast of teaching the same virtues, which we inculcate, such as, innocence, justice, patience, sobriety and modesty; they forget that they have imbibed them from us, and they attribute to philosophy what they were obliged to borrow from Revelation."† Is it because religion destroyed the worship of idols together with the imposture of magick? Is it because she has abolished the bloody feasts of Paganism, servitude and barbarous customs? Is it because she has diffused through all those countries, into which she has penetrated, a spirit of  
peace

† Tertull. Apolog. cap. 46.



peace and charity, exposed the emptiness of worldly riches and the vanity of honors, cemented the ties of blood and confirmed the bonds of society? Is it because all the rage and horrors of war, the despotism of princes and the overbearing cruelty of the people have proved too feeble to resist her powerful inspirations? Is it because she has enlightened the human mind, softened the temper and civilized the manners of the savage, reformed laws and polished nations, that writers, who have torn their instructions from her most sacred oracles, profited by the precepts of the gospel and enjoyed her benefits, dare now to deny their source, and attribute to a vain philosophy the work of a divine wisdom!

If human reason be so powerful, as they say, why have not these fables and absurdities, which call forth a blush on the cheek of modesty, been condemned, but by the preaching of the gospel? Why do they as yet subsist among those people, on whom the sun-shine of truth has  
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never shed her purest rays? Why even to those people are the most simple principles of the natural law, so much unknown; and actions, contrary to this same law, adopted, nay, modelled into precepts? Saint Paul said to the wise assemblies at Athens; *As I passed by . . . . .*

*I found an altar with the following inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, you ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you: a God, who has made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth. . . .*

He has marked out the duration of time, determined the course of the stars, and given laws to the elements. We are the noblest works of his hands. We ought, therefore, to consider ourselves indebted to him for those unexpected changes and events, which, in the moral and political order of things, constitute our happiness and glory. In dispelling the thick cloud of ignorance and error, which long hovered over man, one should almost think that Providence, if I be allowed the expression, vouchsafed

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to confer, on him a newcreation. Happy therefore, by the good effects, which religion hath wrought upon him, let him take care not to mistake the Author, nor add presumption to the blackest of ingratitude.

The absurdities, which human reason daily offers to our consideration, and the narrow sphere of action allotted to her powers, are not the only proofs of her weakness and insufficiency. If Heavenly truths were to be canvassed by the light of reason only, three inconveniences would arise: first, the knowledge of them would be confined to a few; for poverty, inactivity and a weak constitution put it out of the power of many to apply themselves with any advantage to those researches, which accompany the sciences; secondly, even those, who would be in possession of any could never arrive at the knowledge of them, except at a very advanced period of life; and lastly, those, who would come within their reach



reach even at that time, would be liable to adulterate them with falsehood and with errors.

Unbelievers will not dare to pretend that every person without distinction can arrive at that superior knowledge of which they so vainly boast. They insist with too much energy on the prejudices of men, on their ignorance, on their weaknesses, to suppose that people incapable of application or study, or that the worldling ever distracted by his occupations and pleasures, can afford sufficient time to discover the truth, and arrive at the attainment of it. It must, therefore, be confined within the narrow sphere of the learned, or the class, at least, of the better informed. One must, besides, receive superior talents from above, abandon the functions of a civil life, and give himself up entirely to study and discussion, in order to arrive at the true knowledge of what he ought to believe and practise. Nay, and at what time

time would even he, who enjoyed every opportunity and a capacity, suitable for that end, be certain of having at length found out the truth? The greater part of his life would pass away in uncertainty and inquiry. The learned doctors themselves would be consumed by age before they could have discovered the way to live.

On what grounds, besides, can they arrogate to themselves a total exemption from errors and mistakes? Experience is more than sufficient to satisfy us in this point. If the man of genius fall sometimes a victim to error, what confidence can the rude and illiterate have, when obliged to swim on the surface of their shallow understanding? It is evident that the most necessary and essential truths have their apparent difficulties, which must be resolved; it is also evident that the most simple objects furnish the most learned with contradictions, which must be reconcil-

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ed; it is evident, in short, that the practice of the most indispensable duties find in the human heart and in external circumstances, obstacles, which must be surmounted. But what degree of reason would be thought necessary to fix in some sure point of rest weak and inconstant man, whom every thing seduces, or would be even necessary to check the presumption of those, who suffer themselves to be seduced? By what right or authority, besides, can one man exact from another an assent or submission to his opinions? "Human precepts, said Lactantius, "have no power, because they are divested of "authority. None will believe them, because he, who listens, sets as high a value "upon himself as he who speaks."\*

Reason is not, therefore, sufficient to enlighten man, or guide him in the way of truth. But if any other mean be requisite to accomplish this great end, it must certainly exist. Providence could never abandon us without leaving

\* Lactantius on false wisdom. Book 3, No. 27.



leaving a guide to conduct us; and since the wisdom of the world is vain,† a supernatural ray must necessarily shoot forth and come to our assistance.

It is certain, indeed, that man can, and ought to examine, if the doctrine, which is announced to him in the name of the most High, be really his divine word. But what difference between the discussion of a simple man, whose mind is easily enlightened, and of all those who daily summon truth to the tribunal of a glimmering reason! The more important is this fact, the more Heaven hath confirmed it by the most glaring and undeniable proofs. The certainty of a revelation manifests itself not only to all the senses of man, but likewise to all the faculties of his soul. Extraordinary and miraculous facts; a strict accomplishment of a long succession of prophecies; its admirable coincidence with all the dispensations of Providence;

† 1 Corinth. ch. i. v. 21.

dence ; its internal excellence, purity and grandeur ; its rapid progress through the earth, in opposition to all the efforts of policy and persecution ; the divine character of the Messiah ; nature convulsed at the awful moment of his death ; the irresistible witnesses of his resurrection ; the choice of his apostles ; the glorious conversion of the universe ; the persevering incredulity of the Jews ; the unshaken constancy of martyrs ; the sublime connection of his doctrine ; the excellency of his precepts, and the perpetuity of instruction, are proofs so incontestable as to enforce the conviction of evidence on the minds of the most giddy ; nor is it sufficient to object to any supposed impropriety in a small part of it, which may be occasioned by its being seen in a wrong point of view ; unless the disproportion of the whole can be proved, or the foundation on which it stands, undermined. There are no arguments, besides, that religion does not unite in favour of her existence ; no understanding, to which  
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some one of them is not peculiarly adapted. They are each solid and victorious in themselves. They all mutually support each other, and such their power that none can refuse them their assent without introducing scepticism and overturning every principle of certainty. This fact, confirmed by such undeniable proofs, and man confident that God hath spoken, what more does he desire in support of a divine revelation ?

The voice of the Lord dissipates the clouds. † It exempts the human understanding from both tedious and fruitless meditations. It expels the gloom of ignorance, the perplexities of doubt, and the fear of seduction. It renders man familiar with those truths, which are most inaccessible to his reason. Those things, of which the greater part of mankind could never acquire the knowledge either through means of their occupations or their pursuit of pleasures ;

† Psalm LXXVII. 27.



fures; those things, which the most learned men cannot explore even by the most studious and patient assiduity, at once become simple and familiar to him, who is enlightened by the Gospel: Cicero knew not what to think of the Deity:\* Socrates was ignorant of the worship that ought to be paid him:† Seneca saw nothing but uncertainty concerning the nature of the soul. The greatest geniuses have been exhausted on the distinction between moral good and evil, on the first notions of the natural law, on those of virtue..... The illiterate christian is now better informed with regard to the nature of all those objects. There exists not even an artist among us, who does not know his God, and that is not in a capacity of making him known to others.‡ The most abridged catechism presents us with more sublime ideas of the divine nature, of our destiny, of our duties. It exhibits to view a more complete code

\* Cicero de Nat. Deorum, Lib. 1.

† Plato, Lib.

2, Alcibiad.

‡ Tertul. Apolog. cap. 46.

code of doctrine than all the treatises of morality and metaphysics, compiled by the most eminent unbelievers. It has also this advantage over them ; that it comes stamped with the signature of approving Heaven, whilst human systems only discover their deformity and melt away as mists before the sun. Since it is, therefore, certain that the Lord hath revealed himself, how can man refuse his assent and submission ? What he firmly believes on the word of a true God, can be neither prejudice nor illusion. Even mysteries should no longer retard his belief ; and if reason be astonished at their obscurity, would she not be more so affected, if the Almighty pleased to lead her into error ?

God not only speaks to man by Revelation, but also inspires him with fortitude and animates him with courage. The hopes of a futurity, the expectation of eternal rewards and punishments, the example of our divine legislator, the different channels, through which he communicates

communicates his grace, his death, which is the source and seal of all his promises, conspire, in the great system of religion, to raise man above himself, and to render easy to him those obligations under which he lays him. A Revelation, therefore exempt from error, superior to all human institutions, pointing out the road to happiness, and endowing us with sufficient strength to pursue it, is evidently of the highest importance to mankind. It manifests itself not less to the simple and to the ignorant, than to the wise and to the learned. † It is a beneficent sun, the influence of whose cheering rays is felt without distinction through every nation of the earth. It is even Revelation, that has announced the precursor of Jesus Christ, ‡ *who is come from above, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

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† Matth. ch. XI. 25.

‡ Luke, ch. i. v. 79.



But if Revelation be necessary to guide us in the way of truth ; if she be the only clue that can lead us into an eternal mansion, and the surest we can have : If infidelity, on the contrary, be incapable of supplying us with any other mean than a beaten round of variations, of errors and of doubts, what must then become of the audacious projects of unbelievers ? They boast of enlightening man, and yet they darken his understanding ; of setting him above all human prejudices, and yet they deprive him of the only means to confirm him in his belief ; of leading him in the way of truth, and yet they not only teach him to forsake her path, but also mingle in his cup both misery and woe.

If man were not moved by restless desires, tyrannical and importunate passions ; if the pleasures and advantages, at which he so eagerly grasps, as the ultimate resource of all his bliss, would never baffle his expectations ; if, after enjoying what he so earnestly desired, he

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ceased to desire more ; if no uncertainty, no disquietude, no guilty fears damped his more apparent joys ; if age, infirmities, chagrins and unexpected events destroyed not incessantly the imposing charm, which seduces him, lulled by this deceitful calm, he might imagine that all happiness centered in himself, that his opinions with regard to religious truths were totally useless and foreign to his purpose.

But how shall peace and happiness be so universally diffused! *All is vanity and vexation of spirit*, †said the preacher, *a heavy yoke is upon the children of Adam.* ‡ The greatest number of them groan under indigence and pain. If, in the midst of universal distress, a few individuals be found, whom fortune loads with every possible advantage, yet the enjoyment of what they possess, interests them less than the expectation of what they have not. To the possession of one good succeeds the privation of another.

Remorse

† Eccles. I. 14.

‡ Eccles. XL. 1.

Remorse riots in the train of pleasure, and disgrace mingles with the enjoyments of favors and honors. One happy event is blasted by succeeding woe. What makes the happiness of an individual often makes the ruin of many. In vain does fortune visit us upon this earth. She very often flies our little endeavours, and even those on whom she has been most prodigal of her favors, know not how to enjoy her. Sensible of the advantages, which ensue from her protection, they often fall victims to her fickleness and inconstancy.

Is man then born never to be happy? Are his days to pass away in bitterness and sorrow, and his life to be only a tissue of misfortunes? Forbid it Heaven! A thought so injurious to divine goodness is too horrid to be conceived. A desire of being happy is ingrafted in our nature. It is a lively, nay, an universal sentiment, stamped on the human soul, and not the spurious offspring of a blind and mistaken in-



finct. Happiness may illumine our brow, but it is religion that can administer her sweets ; it is only in her bosom that we can find a cordial for the evils which afflict us.

She informs us that we are only passengers upon this earth ; that a new and more pleasing country awaits us beyond the grave ; that the goods of this world are both precarious and perishable, and that those of Heaven are of an eternal duration. † She informs us that the noblest faculty of man survives his apparent destruction ; that its true Habitation is in Heaven, and that *he who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also with Jesus, and place us with him, †* and be partakers of his glory : She informs us that infirmities, misfortunes and disgrace may be considered as the ministers of sanctification and wisdom, as trials, which increase the merit of the just, and augment, in consequence, their reward in Heaven ; that God cherishes  
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† 2 Corinth, IV. 18.

† 2 Corinth. chap. IV. 14.

and supports us even at the time he afflicts us most, \* and that the deceitful appearances of happiness, with which the minds of the wicked are intoxicated, often become the most severe chastisement of his justice. In short, she informs us that death is only a short transition from time to eternity ;† that a Man-God came upon earth, and was crucified in order to procure us peace and a reconciliation with the Almighty‡.

The Belief of a God, the avenger of crimes and the rewarder of virtue, the sublime idea of Providence, the certainty of an eternal life and the thought of a God expiring for our sake, are those powerful motives, which religion opposes to the fury of the passions and the instability of events. Can he be said to be truly unfortunate, who places his confidence in the pleasing hopes, which arise from immortality, who believes that his crimes

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\* 2 Corinth. chap. IV. 17.

† 1 Corinth. chap. XV. 53.

‡ Romans, chap. IV. 25.

are even expiated by him, who is to judge them? Such consoling ideas must certainly strengthen and support the christian in this valley of tears. If Heaven pour on him those riches, which the worldling with eagerness pursues, Religion prescribes the manner of their enjoyment. If, by the decree of Heaven, he be stripped of every temporal blessing, he no longer repines, knowing that all is tinged with vanity. The blaze of prosperity never dazzles him, and the load of misfortune never hangs heavy on him. Disappointments, humiliations, infirmities and dishonor no sooner pierces his soul with bitterness than the thought of a just and all-merciful God pours into the wounds of his affliction the most softening balm. When death approaches with all his hideous train to separate him from what he holds most dear on earth, he finds him flushed with immortality, and panting after the wished for moment, which is to unite him with his Creator.

What



What can infidelity substitute in place of those hopes, those promises and consolations, whereby Religion animates the stagnation of human life and supplies the insufficiency of worldly pleasures? Nothing but barren and imperfect ideas of order and relations, incomprehensible to the greater part of mankind, and destitute of every subsidiary comfort. Nothing but that fatal empire of necessity, which only aggravates human evils in supposing them to be without a remedy. Nothing but a stoical indifference, suitable only to insensible beings. Nothing, in short, but useless reflections, whose weak resolves are borne down by every tide of sorrow. O you infatuated men! who dare doubt of the beneficent views of Providence and of the sublime miracle of our redemption, come and administer your cold consolations to the wretched inhabitant of the country, who purchases by the sweat of his brow that poor, that needy aliment, which only prolongs the miseries of his life. Come and administer your comforts

forts to this tender, but unfortunate mother, whom Heaven hath blessed with sensibility, encircled by a numerous and craving offspring, who incessantly look up to her with eyes of pungent earnestness for that bread, which costs her so much labour and anxiety : To those unhappy sons of poverty, immersed in the depths of woe, concealed from the eye of compassion and lingering out a miserable existence : To this man of pleasure, now sinking under his infirmities, and whom the worm begins to gnaw : To this lingering patient, who knows only how to chuse between the dangers of remedies and those of the disorder, between the pains, that retard the moment of his death, and those, which accelerate its speed : Go, tell this child of misery, that there are no other enjoyments but those, which are found upon earth. Tell him, who is become the victim of fraud and injustice, that interest is the moving principle of man's actions, that all things

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go in order, when its views are amply satisfied. Tell, in short, this unhappy man, stretched on the bed of death, and furrounded with all its aggravating horrors, that it brings a final dissolution, that all is lost, that Heaven exists no more. ....

If Religion, far from drying up the tear of the unfortunate, far from dispelling that cloud of grief, which hovers over the afflicted, only loads them with misery and sorrow, how little do they understand their true interest, who confine our existence to this wretched world! If they deny this natural, this universal horror, which man has for non-entity, this insatiable desire, "this longing after immortality," this rapid thought, which soars even on the wings of futurity and darts into the inmost regions of never ending bliss: If they know not, how much the pleasing prospect of eternity elevates the mind, supports probity, and also inspires both useful and generous actions: If

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they dare to stamp matter with the seal of immortality, and to rob the soul of that glorious epithet, to doubt of that nothing, from which we came into existence, and to look on death, only as a passage to oblivion, to deny the creation of man, and to believe in his annihilation, let them consult, at least, this importunate, this violent thirst for happiness, which animates mankind. Ever reviving and never satisfied, it can neither be quenched by privation, nor lessened by enjoyment. Whence, therefore, can arise this constant struggle between the ardor of our wishes, and the void we experience, when even swollen by satiety? Whence can arise this enormous difference between the overbearing weight of cares and the vanity of pleasures? Whence, in short, this habitual succession of inclinations and desires, whose course even the very moment of dissolution opposes but in vain?

Eternity alone explains the difficulty. Those seeming contradictions, which strike the mind  
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with astonishment, tear off the veil, which concealed our destiny. The hope of a futurity dissipates illusion : It places on a level the high and the low, the rich and the poor : It establishes an equality among men, extinguishes that false lustre, which gilds the goods of this world, extracts from evils their corrosive bitterness, and inspires us with courage to support them. To rob us of so necessary a resource would be to contradict our internal sentiment, insult divine Providence, aggravate our miseries, and sink us into despair.

If infidelity be obliged to grant that the hopes of another life are the greatest comfort we can enjoy upon this earth, she will think, perhaps, she is as capable of making us as happy by exempting us from that dread of eternal punishments, with which Religion threatens us here below. But the unbeliever, in order to extricate himself from this alarming situation, must be first really convinced of this total dissolution, to

which he so daringly aspires. For if he once doubt, or be uncertain of his end, instead of drowning his fears, he only labours to increase them.

He, who firmly believes in the torments of another life, can easily avoid them with the divine assistance ; but he, who is of a contrary opinion, must necessarily allow, that, if they do exist, they will one day fall to his lot. But what proof can infidelity bring down, capable of dissipating every obscurity with regard to the total dissolution of man ? Shall it be his analogy with other beings ? Superior to them all, he resembles none. Shall it be his moral sentiment ? No, he abhors the thought. Will the unbeliever say that eternity is a problem ? He then leaves man a prey to uncertainty, to confusion and trouble of mind. Religion places him in the midst of punishments, which he can avoid with care, and of rewards, which he can procure with ease. But infidelity, on  
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the contrary, throws him into a doubtful void and certain punishments, if she should prove chimerical. In depriving him of the hopes of another life, she only leaves him exposed to all its terrors.

To whom, besides, can this terror be importunate? Is it to the good man, who walks in the way of the Lord and observes his laws? If a just diffidence make him consider the divine judgments with fear and trembling, the wide, the extended view, which the merits of Jesus Christ open to his soul, animates his courage; and whatever awe he may feel, interrupts not the pleasing prospect of his hopes. To none do eternal punishments appear more dreadful than to those, who sport with religion and blaspheme the name of the most High; to sinful man, who violates his commands; to criminal man, who gives himself over to every unruly appetite, invades the property of others, imbrues his hands in the blood of his brethren,

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blasts with pestilential breath the blooming character of innocence, and respects no law, human or divine. But it must be either his own happiness, or that of unjust and corrupt man, which the unbeliever pretends to consult. By espousing that of the latter, must he not evidently set all the passions at liberty, and open a high road to every vice and immorality? Should he not blush to confound his own interests with those of the wicked, to whom alone the awful scene of eternity displays wretchedness and misery?

Religion, however, leaves not the guilty mind destitute of all support. She feeds, she cherishes it with the noblest, the sublimest hopes. Unbelievers even will not assert that human happiness consists in a total indifference to vice or virtue. Neither will they say that the bulk of mankind tread the path of rectitude and probity; no, they candidly confess that those, who stray from it, deserve to be punished,

ed, at least, by Remorse of conscience. But what resource can the impious have in order to be reconciled with themselves, and to appease the anguish of their guilty minds? Ought they to oppose its shafts, or face them with contempt? Vice will then roam uncontrouled, and licentiousness act openly in defiance of all bounds. Will they think to expiate their crimes by virtuous actions? But these actions are duties, which they cannot neglect without becoming more culpable, but which they can fulfil without becoming innocent. They must, therefore, live in perpetual war with themselves, whether they be steeled against the arrows of remorse, or so tempered, as to yield to their impression; whether they precipitate themselves into the abyss of sin or madly rush into all the gloomy horrors of despair.

What accelerates the downfall of infidelity heightens the triumph of Religion. If she animate virtue by the hopes of rewards, she consoles the guilty by the hopes of pardon. The  
grace



grace of redemption is extended to all men, to all times, to all errors. She exempts not the sinner from expiating the strayings of his heart, but she also renders the expiation of them profitable. I am, said St. Paul, a great sinner, but I obtained the mercy of God.\* Notwithstanding the enormity of my crimes, he *who spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will he not also give me all things with him?*† He died in order to deliver me from the slavery of sin, he has most amply paid the price of my redemption, and will be my rewarder and deliverer. Such are the consolations of Religion, which support us in every circumstance of our lives. Hope, not possession, is the broadest basis of all human happiness, and the hopes of the gospel are as infinite, as the God, on whose transcendent merits they are founded.

If after having considered man in himself, we come to view him under the different relations,

\* 1 To Timothy, chap. I. v. 13.  
v. 32.

† Romans, ch. VIII.

tions, which he holds in common with his equals, how much does religion still contribute to his happiness? Those unbelievers, who have not abjured every principle of morality, or every idea of modesty, so far agree with us, that man is not happy under all these various relations, but in as much as he fulfils the duties, which immediately result from them. How, therefore, can they, with such sentiments as these, pretend to weaken not only the influence, but also the belief of the gospel?

I have already said, and shall now prove more at large, that natural morality is totally insufficient, that the love of our duty is connected with the love of Religion, and that she alone hath power to stem the torrent of our passions. But before I think it proper to launch forth into this detail, and in order to hold out more to public view the malice of the enemies of Religion, I shall ask: Does she, in the least, alienate us from the practice of virtue? Since she does

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not ; since our sacred books teem with precepts, useful to all states ; since these very precepts find in the authority, which dictates them, in the promises, which accompany them and in the grace, which renders them possible, new strength, new charms, is it not openly attacking the rights of mankind to rob them of so powerful a succour ? Assisted by divine and human laws shall we signalize the days of our earthly existence only by our infidelities ? and can we imagine we consult our welfare, when we lay aside that curb, which is the most capable of keeping us within bounds ?

As Religion, in every state, tends to enforce the several obligations, which she inculcates, in order to bind fast the ties of blood and the union of marriages, to cement friendship and affection, to render alliances and promises more sacred and inviolable ; as she extends the tenderness of parents, the gratitude and love of children, the indulgence of masters, and the  
faithfulness



faithfulness of servants, † she ought to be considered in this life, as the most inexhaustible fund of happiness, that Heaven could bestow on man. Disorder always generates misfortune, and the greatest enemy to mankind is he, who envies them the means of preventing or repairing it.

Religion still further consults the felicity of man. If he be not really happy, except when he fulfils the several duties incumbent on him, he cannot be even so then, properly speaking, but by the influence of that sentiment, which endears them to him. The sensibility of his soul is his *primum mobile*, the source of his pleasures and of his pains. But this sensibility, infused by God to inspire us with a love of virtue, hath either strayed from its proper channel, or been retarded in its due progress by the influence of irreligious principles. The advocates of a cruel fatality see nothing in the movements of

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† To the Coloss. chap. III. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

the soul, but a blind operation of springs, moved on by a necessary impulse ; and those, who sacrifice every thing to the gratification of their passions, see nothing that can suppress this sensibility or give it laws. Religion, on the contrary, extends and directs it. On one hand, she multiplies relations and dependencies among men ; she binds fast the ties, which unite them, she adds to those very ties, ties still more respectable, which strengthen and support them. On the other hand, she directs, or restrains the inclinations of the heart, forewarns it of illusions, points out to it, what to fly from with abhorrence, and what to pursue with ardor. In short, she secures us from those dreadful rocks against which the current of our sensibility might endanger our virtue, and from such an aridity of soul, as might destroy every future scene of happiness.

Unbelievers boast of nothing but equality, humanity and beneficence ; but Religion gives  
substance

substance and reality to these consoling ideas. In the eye of nature, strength, understanding, fortune and power are all unequal, and in this subdivision there is nothing to recompense him, to whom it is unfavourable. In the eye of faith, all men are children of the same Father, who is in Heaven. Inequality of condition alters not their primitive level. The cedar and the hyssop are all the same before the Omnipotent, and when He shall come to judge the living and the dead, all distinctions shall cease, except those which are founded on their virtues. In the eye of nature, man ought to love himself in preference to any other, and the services, which he expects from the hands of his fellow-creatures, are the measure of those, which he confers upon them. In the eye of faith, we ought to love our neighbours as ourselves, and blend their interests with ours. In the eye of nature, beneficence is only bound to pour her superfluities into the lap of indigence. She is not perfect in the eye of faith, but when she retrenches even from a competency. Christian  
 charity



charity adds lustre and perfection to natural sensibility. From the movements of the soul arise her happiness or her ruin, according to the manner, in which they are directed. The sentiment, with which she is inspired by charity, fills and satisfies her. He, whom she animates, enjoys every thing he possesses, every thing he wishes for, every thing he designs. He is replete with virtues, which he daily practices; he possesses benefits, which he daily scatters around him; he suffers losses to which he submits with christian fortitude. The Unbeliever may sometimes be faithful to his duties, but the true christian alone feels the highest pleasure in their final accomplishment.

There still exists a fruitful principle of felicity and peace, which is utterly destroyed by infidelity. Man alone is incapable of providing for himself. To supply his weakness the Almighty has been pleased to appoint him a department in society: † Reciprocal wants unite all its members

† Eccles, chap. IV. v. 9, 10.

members and render them useful to each other. Their strength increases by this junction, this mutual aid. This mutual aid, which compensates and justifies the unequal distribution of goods, constitutes the support and welfare of man, the security and comfort of his life.

A famous Author † of the last century, from whom our modern unbelievers have borrowed their sophisms and followed his extravagance, proposed the following problem : “ Whether  
 “ a society of men could exist without any  
 “ religion ? ” There is no necessity for answering chimerical questions of this nature. Admitting such states to have existed ; yet people, destitute of religion, live without police, without true subordination, and are entirely savage. If a corrupt air infect certain parts of the earth, and yet renders them not quite uninhabitable, will it thence follow that a pure and wholesome air is not necessary for the existence of man ? Though barbarous customs be still retained in certain uncivilized countries, will unbelievers  
 conclude

† Hobbs.

conclude that it is indifferent to tolerate or proscribe them? As well might the ignorance of the plebeian or the stupidity of an idiot be urged as a demonstration of the falshood of a mathematical proposition.

It is a matter of very little moment, whether in a corner of Africa or America a few herds of savages be found, so lost to the dictates of their nature, or, in the moral sense, such prodigies, such monsters, as to be incapable of the impressions of virtue. But the question is, whether a society of such people would ever become flourishing or cultivate tranquility? Whether their morals would shine with purity or refinement? Whether their services would become reciprocal, their actions generous and common, their government respected and their laws obeyed? These are the pillars, on which all the splendor and harmony of society rest secure. This is the center and union from which diverge all the relations and connexions of men among themselves. If it be also certain  
that



that religion exhorts us to the practice of virtue, to beneficence, to patriotism, to peace, to obedience, whilst Infidelity, on the contrary, alienates us from them, will it not plainly demonstrate that the wisdom of men is nothing but folly ; that piety is useful to society, † that Jesus Christ is not less our benefactor here below than our deliverer hereafter?

The influence of Religion on the morals of man is sufficiently evident. Under her direction he immediately fulfils the many obligations, which his different connexions impose upon him. The virtues of each citizen form the morals of the public, and the morals of the public constitute the strength and vigor of the state. I do not, however, pretend that all unbelievers have lost every idea of morality in speculation, nor every virtuous sentiment in practice. The cry of conscience, the principles of uprightness, engraven on the hearts of all,

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† Timoth. IV. v. 8.

natural elevation, imbibed under a proper instruction, may keep alive, in some virtuous souls, a moral sense of good and evil, there plant both tender and generous affections, there produce that love of order, which is the foundation of every virtue.

But these principles are confirmed in the Christian by means of those motives, which are held out to him by religion, and we must consequently weaken them, if we attempt to undermine the belief of that divine system. These principles, however, though sufficient in the ordinary course of life, are yet too feeble, nay, inadequate against critical circumstances of every kind, impetuous passions and violent temptations, to which man is every where exposed; on the contrary, the graces and promises of the gospel have an astonishing, a victorious power. It would be, therefore, rendering virtue uncertain to rob her of the support

support of Religion. Though the Christian Doctrine be obvious to all men, yet its principles are not so; neither to the wicked, who only consult the immediate gratification of their passions; neither to the rustic, who is dragged on by his lawless senses, nor to the multitude, who are incapable of justness and precision. To destroy Religion, therefore, would be to deprive the public morals of the most universal resource, that Providence could devise. All the means, moreover of which society makes use in order to oblige men to fulfil their respective duties, are approved of and confirmed by Religion, and totally insufficient would they be, did she not lend them her powerful assistance.

The first of these means is the interest of man, which if well regulated and directed by Religion, would be the safe-guard of his morals, the pledge of his reciprocal services, without which society must necessarily decay. But this



powerful spring is often an obstacle in him, who, studying his own welfare, separates it from that of the public, who, wishing to exist for himself only, thinks that he owes nothing to others. Such sentiments must soon affect the whole frame and crumble it into ruin. It cannot, like the universe, support itself, but by the harmony and correspondence of its parts.

I could here easily reproach unbelievers with some of their extravagancies, who, in recalling man to his own interest, have not hesitated to enervate filial respect, paternal love, the ties of blood, the bonds of friendship, probity, courage and disinterestedness; who have not blushed to justify avarice, sensuality and the inordinate pleasures of the senses, and who, under a vain pretence of reinstating him in all his privileges, have overturned those of society.

It is not however, on the errors of individuals, but on the doctrine of infidelity itself that

that I wish to establish the triumph of Religion. Let us suppose an unbeliever animated by a love of the public good, saying unto men: " Since each member of society is subject to " infinite wants, and is endowed with faculties, " too limited to provide against them, the industry of many ought to supply that of an " individual ; in serving our equals we cannot " hurt ourselves, and the good offices we render them are always a weak compensation " for those we receive at their hands."

Let me now ask this Unbeliever, whether this union of general and particular interests would be always powerful and sensible enough of itself, so that society should lose nothing of her rights? To be useful to our fellow-creatures we must sometimes part with what we hold most dear. To serve humanity we must often forget ourselves. Beneficence always supposes privations, and sacrifices are often the result of generosity. The passions, in particular, vote destruction

destruction on the heads of those, whom they govern, and whatever favours them most, always appears to us to be our dearest and truest interest. If the duties, which we must discharge, be painful : If the services due by us, be immediately at hand, and those we expect, remote : If these good offices jarr with strong inclinations and reigning modes, what just motive shall we find in ourselves to determine our will, when guided by this species of self-love, to which infidelity would abandon us ? The rewards, which society offers to her members, are not adequate to the benefits of which she would fain deprive them. The incitements she holds out to us, are of the same order with those, which stimulate our resistance. Besides, how great the difference, with respect to immediate advantage, between the good of which we deprive ourselves, and that, which she offers to our consideration ! the first, being always at hand, the latter, often uncertain and remote.



remote. Would it be astonishing, if, obliged to consult nothing but our own happiness, we were induced to prefer what is profitable to ourselves, to that which is only useful to others, our private interest to that of the public, and our personal advantage to that of the community?

Religion, on the contrary, not only points out society to man, as the center of every thing that is dear, but also as the perpetual miracle of divine wisdom, and the greatest of all his works after the creation. To disturb its order, therefore, must necessarily displease the Almighty, and whatever deranges its harmony must be a kind of sacrilege and profanation. Society is in the eyes of the Christian, one immense family, of which God is the head and all the members brethren. United together to help and relieve each others wants, the law of love, given to all men, was peculiarly made for it. When, by mutual

tual services, they give way to its operation, they fill up that part of the ministry, to which Providence vouchsafed to appoint them; and they become highly accountable to God, if they refuse protection to their fellow-creatures, or neglect to perform such benefits, as they are obliged to render them.

From such ideas as these, what floods of joy must not every Christian feel from the practice of each social virtue! He will, no doubt, hear from time to time the imperious voice of his senses; he will experience the violent attacks of irregular desires, exciting him to cruelty and injustice; but he will hear, at the same time, the voice of God, calling him back to a love of his brethren; he will see cruelty and injustice pursued by divine vengeance; he will see rewards prepared for the beneficent, the charitable, for the obedient, the faithful subject, for the good and generous citizen. Should even his private

vate interest clash with that of society, another interest, foreign to this land, and of a superior nature, animates and supports him. Limited to the present moment, infidelity cannot distinguish between that, which society promises that, and which she requires. The Christian, in sacrificing to her his fortune, his repose, nay, even his life, knows that he is advancing his salvation. Religion detaches him both from the advantages he must give up for the good of society, and from those which he is to receive from her. As he seeks not her favors, nor fears the reproaches of her ingratitude, whether she neglects or protects him, he never ceases to be faithful to her interests from the motives displayed to him by Religion.

The second of these means, which society employs in order to oblige man to fulfil his duties, is the authority of government. We shall freely coincide with the unbeliever, that this authority is the most powerful agent to maintain

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peace and union, to protect the weak and curb injustice. Evil, says the scripture, is not without a remedy, *for he that is high hath another higher, and there are others still higher than these.\**

But, in order that authority should produce those salutary effects, which society expects therefrom, it is as necessary, that the subject should respect it, as it is that the prince should support and maintain it without perversion. Rebellion and the abuse of power often prove fatal even to those, who seem to be the most interested to promote them. But to hold the political helm with safety between these two dangerous shelves, this Scylla and Charybdis, of what efficacy is Religion possessed ! She declares to mankind that every power comes from God : † That the prince is his minister : That we must be subject to him, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, and that to resist him is to resist the ordinance of Heaven. She declares

\* Ecclesiastes, V. 7.      † Rom. XIII. 1, 5, 6.

declares to the kings of the earth, that their power is given them by the Lord, and strength by the most High, who will examine their works and search out their thoughts : † That the more they are independent of those whom they govern, the more severely shall they be judged by him, from whom they derive their authority : That they ought to be among their subjects as one of them, and never to repose until they had discharged their duty. ‡ Love, submission and respect in the people ; goodness, tendernefs and justice in Kings, are the principles, which our holy Religion inspires ; and will they not, if deeply impressed on the minds of all, prevent unjust dissention ? Will they not naturally, on one hand, fix the inconstancy and disquietude of the people, melt away every hope of corrupt ambition, and maintain fidelity and obedience ? Will they not, on the other, restrain injustice, render rulers good, beneficent and just, nay, induce them

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† Wisdom, VI. 3, 4, 6.

‡ Ecclesiasticus, XXXII. v. 1, 2.

to become the images of God by their goodness, as they are already by their power? But what is the language of Infidelity? She sees in the formation of states nothing but the natural effect of violence and necessity; in public power, nothing but the union of particular forces. She, therefore, becomes incapable of proposing any superior motive, whereby she might restrain the use of authority or enforce obedience. She may say, indeed, to sovereigns and subjects, that there exists between them an express or implied contract, whereby they are mutually obliged to fill up their respective obligations. She may tell the former that they are not less bound by this contract than those, who are subject to them; that violence enervates power, and that the love of the people is not the basis only, but the brightest ornament of the throne. To the latter she may say, that it is their interest never to violate this contract; that licentiousness is the bane of liberty, and their submission the pledge of their happiness and quiet. But  
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if authority be founded on this primitive contract only, whether real or supposed, will not the prince conclude that the most infallible mean to support it, is, to put it out of the power of the people to infringe it? That their weaknesses and imbecility are the only sureties of their fidelity, and that, in order to have faithful subjects, it will be necessary to make them feel all the pangs of misery and oppression? On the contrary, will not the people conclude that the prince is accountable for the use of that authority, which he holds from them; that they can secure their rights, though ever so little violated by him, and, as caprice leads, lawfully transfer the public power, of which he has only the use, into the hands of another?

These are not vague inductions, with which an unjust zeal might wish to furnish Infidelity. The first is granted by that famous politician, who

who preached up tyranny to Kings.† The second is diffused through the writings of our modern Unbelievers. We are often at a loss in reading the greater part of their works, to conclude whether they have declared themselves more against the sovereign of Heaven than against the sovereigns of the earth. But whether these consequences be granted or not, they necessarily flow from their doctrine. If the powers that be are not of God, if the public authority, which always resides in the body of the people, be only a transitory deposit, confided to the care of their rulers; if it can oblige them to give an account of the use of their administration, what evils will not ensue from the fear of losing, or the desire of restoring it? The exercise of authority lies in the hands of confidence. If the rights of the people be improperly enforced, their own uneasiness is increased, and that of their sovereign excited. The idea of a precarious power carries its abuse;  
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† Hobbs.

the idea of a power, subject to no controul, is big with terror and desolation. The fear of resistance turns the scale of justice, and independence riots in the gloomy train of black injustice. The sole idea of a God, who is the King of Kings, who establishes and judges them, animates him who obeys, moderates him who commands, curbs licentiousness and tyranny, and keeps within their respective duties both the prince and the people.

The third of these means, which society employs for the security and welfare of its members, are laws. But are not even these found insufficient to punish every error, or recompense every virtue? Secret violations often escape their vigilance. The most wicked and abominable crimes sometimes defy their rigor. Laws serve only to enforce the mere and outward form of morality, but not its essence. The real good of society consists less in the absence



fence of crimes and trespasses, than in the practice of virtue, and the constant habit of good and generous actions.

Let us take a short comparative view of human and divine laws. Whether the most perfect, that which inculcates: "Thou shalt not kill," or that, which says: "Thou shalt not be angry." That prohibiting adultery, or that proscribing lascivious looks? That endeavouring to prevent violence, or that providing punishment for detraction? That interdicting us to do an injury to our neighbour, or that forbidding us to do evil for evil? Human laws are only directed against the crime; whilst those of Religion strike deeply at the root of vice. Those condemn criminal actions, whilst these encourage virtuous ones. Those stop the hand, whilst these speak to the heart and check its motions. Human institutions prescribe only what is indispensable. Religion leads to perfection: The road

road by which she guides thereto, encourages the execution of her commands. If the sublime efforts of virtue be not held in esteem, virtue herself would soon become a shadow, a baseless fabrick, reared only by fancy in the minds of men.

Though human laws be even thought sufficient to maintain peace and happiness in society, is not Religion, however, the most powerful mover to enforce the observance of them? Every thing the law commands, at once becomes sacred in the eyes of the christian. To him obedience has but one exception, which is, when human laws stand in opposition to those of God. If in this case alone, *it is better to obey God than man*,† in every other circumstance, it is obeying God, when we obey those whom he has appointed over us. Religion associates the laws of the earth with those of Heaven, and if we destroy her influence, what other motive

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† Acts, chap. V. v. 29.

can we substitute in her stead? Shall it be the vigilance of an attentive police? How many wicked actions escape its efforts? The Christian, notwithstanding, is under the eye of God from which nothing can be concealed. Shall it be the severity of punishments? They have a term, but those, which God prepares for guilty man shall be eternal. Shall it be a dread of government? Fear only creates slaves, but Religion leads by gentleness and love to the execution of justice. Shall it be interest? Interest fills up the catalogue of violations and crimes. It is, therefore, the province of Religion alone to inspire this love of order, this taste for happiness, this fidelity to our duties, this respect for the law, which tends to persuade us from transgression, even when the violation of it rests in the bosom of security. Religion haunts the crime into the inmost recesses of the heart. Thought and action lie suppliant at her call, and human laws begin to be observed, from  
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the moment we become faithful to those of the gospel.

Here it will be necessary to shew, how frightful in itself, how destructive to society, and even contrary to the observance of laws, is that barbarous custom, suicide, which Infidelity seems to have brought among us, and whose fatal introduction has unfortunately met with every possible success and encouragement.

It is in vain that Providence has stationed us upon this earth ; it is in vain that He attaches us to our conservation by that sentiment, which He has so deeply impressed on the minds of all ; it is in vain that He has united us to parents, children, friends and fellow-citizens by the most powerful and alluring charms. Infidelity is not ashamed to tell us, that our days are at our own disposal, that pain exempts us from every obligation of life, and that our first and principal aim should be to extricate ourselves

from its rigor. She exhorts us to live only for ourselves ; nay, does she not encourage us to put a tragic end to our existence, as soon as our lives become, in the least, importunate and burthenfome ? Is this the term ? Is this the summary of all the promises of infidelity ? She not only blasts our future hopes, but also deprives us of the few remaining days we have as yet to pass in this land of sorrow. She invites us to be partakers of non-existence, and a total dissolution is the only term of her wishes. Are these the services she renders society in depriving her of her citizens, which constitute her strength ! Is this the respect she enforces towards the support of laws ! What effect will temporary punishments have on the wretch, who neither startles at grim death, nor fears its consequences !

Religion, indeed, approves of that heroic sentiment, which renders us superior to all the  
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terrors of approaching dissolution. She, indeed, exhorts us to die in the field rather than to see our country perish. † The Christian languishes for the wished for moment, which is to put a period to the days of his sorrow ‡ But what difference between him, who, mad-like, anticipates the awful scene? That respects the order of Almighty, the duties of society, the voice of blood and the ties of friendship. This sacrifices every thing to that load of misfortunes, which he thinks he can no longer support. The resignation of this life is a folly, unless it originates from the pure hopes of another. It becomes a weakness, when guided by no other principle, but that of pain or fear, nay, must it not be a crime, when neither God nor our country require it at our hands?

If unbelievers think, that by these sentiments they can elevate human courage, let them distinguish

† Machab. Book I. chap. 9. v. 10.

‡ Philip, chap. I. v. 23.



distinguish true valour from that violent and immoderate fury, inspired by self despair, which sacrifices what it has only just began to hate. Religion, on the contrary, forms true heroes, and renders them useful to society. The fortitude of a virtuous citizen constitutes the strength and vigour of the state, but, in order to secure the tranquility of the public, it is necessary that guilty man be not exempt from fear. Woe be to society, if crimes were endowed with that constancy and courage, for which our virtues are so eminently conspicuous! What its remedy, if the offender despise his present existence and laugh at all the horrors of a future!

This dread of future punishments has been always considered as the most efficacious means to keep men within due bounds, and to moderate the impetuosity of their passions. The ancient legislators, notwithstanding the gloom and darkness of idolatry, into which they were so deeply immersed, believed that, without this opinion,

opinion, without the notion of a God with the consequent hopes, it was impossible to secure the public order, or strengthen the empire of virtue.

These false Religions, in what they contained, either good or true, have not absolutely sufficed to give vigor to the constitution of states; but the fables of which they were composed, rendered, in a great measure, ineffectual the remnant of that precious truth, which had never been left without a witness. These systems, made up of a blind, seditious, turbulent, interested zeal, replete with ignorance, confused, destitute of order and reason, with errors and superstition interwoven, ever left at the bottom of their conscience the seeds of uncertainty and doubt, which always prevented their theology from resting on a pure and solid basis.

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We must, therefore, look out for a more solid foundation of states in that truth, that mother of peace, which is no where to be found, but in the true Religion. Which true Religion, if constituting the happiness and security of states, why loaded with the odious reproaches of Unbelievers? According to their assertion, Religion brings confusion into empires: the zeal, to which she gives rise, arms brethren against brethren. The authority, conferred on her ministers, circumscribes that of princes, and is far from cultivating even among Christians those virtues, which she prescribes.

I shall here pass over the astonishing contradiction of reproaching Religion all at once with the ardor she inspires, and the opposition she experiences. I shall not complain of that cruel artifice of tracing back a sad remembrance, nor shall I probe those wounds, which  
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are long since healed. I shall not endeavour to find in the rage of false politicks, excuses for those injuries, which the ministers of the God of peace ought never to have influenced. It is readily granted, that Religion at all times had unfaithful disciples: It is even true, that among these, some have been found, who have abused his most sacred name, and that noble, that august sign of our faith, profaned by their unruly passions, had sometimes been displayed, as the standard of revolt. But is it not ungenerous to impute to Religion that to which her spirit and genius is the very reverse, and to judge of the law of God by the imbecility of man? If Religion gave sanction to an excess of a restless, destructive, superstitious zeal, and far from approving such a conduct, did not, in the least, condemn it; if she curb'd not man, whom she animates, and prescribed no limits to the authority of her ministers, we might then fairly conclude, that the more her power became great, the more she

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became dangerous. But let us open our books, our sacred writings. We shall there find that no reason, no pretence can authorise a revolt; that the abuse, which sovereigns make of their power is not even a sufficient motive to withdraw our allegiance; that an infidel prince ought to be respected, served and obeyed with zeal and submission, and that he ceases not to be the representative of the Deity, though he offends him by his actions. We shall there find that the power of the church extends not beyond the kingdom of Jesus Christ, who is not of this world; that she has no authority, either direct or indirect over the temporals of kings; that the precept, which enjoins submission to superior powers, relates not only to the people, but to all mankind without distinction, whether Priests, Apostles or Evangelists; and that the ministers of Jesus Christ claim no other prerogative on this head, but that of enforcing by their instruction the bonds of fidelity, love  
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and obedience, which unite subjects to their sovereigns.

If, in the times of turbulence and fury, these principles of true Religion have been forgotten ; if ambitious chiefs seduced or roused whole nations to arms ; if, by the cursed influence of the passions, civil wars became religious ones, the Christian Faith is not, therefore, to be slandered or arraigned. The benefits derived from her are the natural effects of her instruction, and the evils attributed to her influence, are in direct opposition to her principles. When we attack Unbelievers, we do not arraign their actions. We rather examine their doctrine in itself. The holiest is only destined to instruct and regulate the conduct of mankind. What moral rule can be secure from censure, if it become accountable for the digressions of those, whom it is calculated to direct ?



Religion, indeed, inspires those, who are obedient to her voice with an ardent zeal for the glory of the most HIGH. Would to God this zeal had never abated ! we had never then been witnesses of so many scandals and violations of laws. The love of God is neither ambitious, vindictive nor interested : It means no harm ; it never rejoices at injustice ; it bears every thing with patience, and looks on peace, as the source of all blessings. If some persons, who were animated by this zeal, ran, at times, into wild extravagancies, are not the best men liable to error, and the greatest virtues to excess ? Must the love of our country, which sees her sons anxiously intent on her destruction, under a pretence of defending her, be utterly extinguished ; and must we totally suppress the voice of nature, when only obliged to moderate her powers ?

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The Deist boasts of fomenting no disorders : An insensible being would excite them no more than he. How can the unbeliever, who so often seeks to justify his passions, wish the soul to be without energy ? The more vivid that energy, while impressed by true Religion, the more useful it becomes. Great effects are only produced by great movements. Passions beget vice ; but a total indifference of the soul extinguishes every virtue. The danger of zeal consists only in the abuse. Man can serve God and glorify him only by being faithful to his duties. He becomes unfaithful, if the state be embroiled through his means. When the action is criminal, no laudable motive can afford excuse. Our arms are the arms of love, of tears, of prayers. It is equally the same to offend God, as not to confess him even to the effusion of our blood, or, under a pretence of serving him, to derange the order and tranquillity of the public.

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We might, in order to destroy the slanderous charges objected to us by unbelievers, put in opposition those good effects, which have been produced by revealed Religion throughout the christian world. Certain it is that all the resources of nature were exhausted ; all the efforts of policy had been exerted in vain ; the genius and power of philosophy had been urged to the utmost ; and full justice had been done to the faculty of reason : Yet the united influence of all these powers, was incapable of effecting the reformation of mankind, errors started up, corruption encreased, Gods multiplied upon Gods, and public worship became such an enormous system of absurdity and superstition, that even its priests could not refrain from ridiculing it. What the state of human nature would be, if left to its own weakness, we cannot anticipate without pain. In what consequences such cruel wars, such unnatural sentiments



sentiments of revenge avowed and defended,  
 such indifference to oaths, such public violation  
 of nature, chastity and honor, would have  
 terminated, no man can imagine without re-  
 luctance. But through the influence of re-  
 vealed Religion our manners are become more  
 polished and refined: our laws are daily re-  
 formed and breathe a true spirit of Christianity:  
 The rage of duelling subsides; slavery is no  
 longer made the tool of policy, nor Religion a  
 cloak for bigotry: Black animosity no longer  
 finds a covering under the veil of sanctity; and  
 the most hostile natures are amicably recon-  
 ciled: The throne of violence has long since  
 tottered from its foundations, and society seems  
 pleased to have thrown off the shackles of her  
 former degeneracy. The insatiable thirst of  
 blood is in a good measure abated; the cruelties  
 of slavery are checked; marriage is restored to  
 its natural and sacred honors, and polygamy and  
 incest are abolished as destructive to the inte-  
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rests of humanity ; the idol set up by poetical invention is no longer revered, and only serves to shew, how unable man was to form any just and proper conceptions of his Creator: a more amicable and benevolent spirit is diffused through all ranks of society, and the world carries with it more the aspect of a community of rational creatures than it ever did before. Charity and love are now the insignia of the Christian, and *love thy neighbour as thyself*, is the motto of his arms. Nothing but a Religion, armed with so much power as the Christian, could have produced such glorious advantages, nor could have encountered such inveterate prejudices, or extirpated passions so malignant as prevailed in the law of nature ; passions even rendered sacred by Religion, and familiarized by practice and by custom.

But without entering into this discussion, let us propose one question to unbelievers.

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When they seek to blacken Revelation, and to cry it down in the eyes of the people, what are their projects and their views? The boldest of them confesses, that it is impossible to make a whole people forget their religious opinions and the ideas, which they have already formed of the Deity. But if the multitude cannot be without Religion, is it to shield them from superstition, that they would fain to weaken in them the belief of the gospel? The more uncertain the people with respect to their Theology, the more uncertain they become. To the weak notions of a Divinity have succeeded all the absurdities of paganism. The Christian Religion has undeceived the universe. The generous and enlarged spirit of her doctrines looked beyond the prejudices of particular nations, and gloriously aimed to unite the world in one common sentiment of love and benevolence : She was calculated for men, and not savages ; for climes of reason, and not

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countries of ignorance and barbarity; and she has only been rejected, where the Almighty has not given intelligence to do justice to her laws, and knowledge to comprehend the full scope of her nature and design. She still secures us from the ravings and digressions of superstition. Whilst the apprehensions of the people, their desires, their impatience are ready every moment to escape the vigilance of their pastors, what but the knowledge of truth can preserve them from error, and, in order to avoid a superstitious worship, must they not begin by rendering to God that, which he prescribes?

It must be allowed that states can but ill exist without any principle of Religion. Woe be to them, who are governed by powers destitute of any! If their souls be naturally violent; if they be led on by passion; if avarice lord it over them, what authority can secure the public

public peace, or keep within bounds those, whom human laws cannot restrain? A deistical Prince, born with a fiery valor, is a dreadful lion, who perceives not his liberty, but when he tears or devours. What is he but a malignant planet, that portends nothing but calamities to the inferior world? Public order and tranquility cannot be the fruit of a lawless ambition; nor can he be said to serve his country well who serves it at the expence of Religion and virtue; it is sapping the foundation of the building in order to embellish and raise it higher; it is weakening its chief supporters to add to it vain ornaments, which accelerate its ruin. Thus do the ill concerted projects of infidelity destroy themselves. She rather favours the two scourges, which she seems to dread most, despotism and superstition. Her doctrine, besides, is neither suited to the well-being of sovereigns nor to the prosperity of nations.

Superstitious people, indocile subjects, tyrannical kings, unfaithful citizens, impotent laws, no fear against the commission of crimes, no hope for the practice of virtue, no consolation for the wretched, uncertain and superficial knowledge conducing more to lead astray than to set aright, are the fruits, which Irreligion yields to man. Lend your attention for a moment to what God had formerly said to his people through the ministry of Moses and the Prophets, : \* *It is I that am your God* : † I brought your fathers from a desert country : I have led them into fat and fertile plains : I gave them the land of hope, the land of promise : You have always been my cherished people and the object of my complacency. If you be faithful to my voice, I shall continue to heap on you my benefits ; but if you turn aside from my law ; if you forget me, I, who have neither

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\* Deut. XXXII. 46.

† Exodus, XX. 2.



beginning nor end, † I shall arm against you all the scourges of my wrath: I shall spread around you disorder and confusion: I shall break asunder all those bonds, which unite you: The father and son shall no longer know the claims of blood; citizens those of their country, nor subjects those of authority: My favors shall turn to the side of your enemies: Your laws shall be void of force and vigor: Your power shall only serve to enslave you, and the sciences, in which you glory, shall only tend to corrupt the powers of your understanding.

Return, therefore, to your God. ‡ Think not your faith is out of danger, because it may be still entire, or that it suffices, in order to be a Christian, that you have adopted the vain contradictions and blasphemies of impiety. If your attention increase not in proportion to its exertions, if a false security induce you to lay  
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† Deut. XXXII. 40.

‡ Math. XV. 14.

your hands on impious writings ; if you begin not to dread the the envenomed cup of error, until the poison discovers and presents itself to view, conducted by the blind you shall soon fall with them down the precipice. \* *He that loveth danger shall perish therein.* † *Evil communications corrupt good manners* ‡ and enervate faith. Dangerous reading kills the soul with the venom it contains. *The spirit is quick* : § The passions make it revolt against Religion. Weak within, pursued without ; if man listen to seduction, he immediately becomes its prey. Vigilance is his salvation, and such is the malice of the present age, that the Christian ought ever to be on his guard, like those travellers, who are forced to fly through those infectious plains, where the least sleep is followed by immediate dissolution.

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† Ecclesiast. III. 27.

‡ 1 Corinth. XV. 33.

§ Math. XXVI. 41.

It will not be sufficient to repel the enemy, which conspires your ruin, your conduct, besides, must be a continual reparation of the offences already committed against the Almighty. You see that the opposition of your morals to your belief became a pretence of reproach, with which Infidelity upbraids our holy Religion. If this reproach be unjust in its consequences, you are not, however, less culpable, when you afford occasion : You render yourselves, in some manner, accomplices of these imputations in authorizing them by your misconduct. If you conduct yourselves, in a manner, worthy of your vocation † with mildness, patience, and humility ; if you cease to offend by your actions the God, whom you honour by your prayers ; if you were not sometimes indifferent as to the interest of your faith, or animated by too bitter a zeal in its defence ; ‡  
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† To the Ephes. IV. 1, 2.

‡ To Timoth. II. 24, 25.



if the love of the world, which Religion condemns, exclude not from your hearts the love of God, which she prescribes ; if, in a private domestic life, the father were tender and respected, the spouse virtuous and loving, the children obedient, the masters indulgent, and the servants faithful ; if, in society, old age were prudent and youth more reserved ; if the poor were industrious and the rich beneficent ; if the weak knew how to obey without murmur, without meanness, and the great to command without caprice, without pride ; if each of us would respect the duties, which our age, our fortune, our condition, the law of God and that of man impose upon us, who would dare arraign the articles of our belief ?

When Tertullian was sent for to prove his Religion before the Emperors and to endear it

it to them, he produced, as a proof of its excellency, the fidelity of Christians, the innocence of their manners, their love of peace, and all those virtues, which distinguished them from Idolaters. Let us, in like manner, prove by our conduct, the utility and advantages of Revelation. The accomplishment of the law \* is that charity, which comes from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere hope. Those, who turn therefrom, stray in their vain reasonings. But if this charity fill your hearts, you will avoid the snares, which surround you : You will not sit in the assembly of the wicked ; † you will not walk in the way of sinners : ‡ either your virtues will stand as the trophies of your glory, or those neglected precepts, which enjoin them, display the ensigns of your condemnation. In

O

short,

\* To Timoth. 1 chap. I. v. 5, 6.

† Psalm, XXV. 4, 5.

‡ Psalm, I. v. 1.

short, if you shall confess *Jesus Christ before men,*  
you will he also confess before his *Father, who is in*  
*Heaven.* †

† Matth. chap. X. v. 32.

F I N I S.





# E R R A T A.

Page 5, line 19, instead of *chusing* read *choosing*

7, — 12, instead of *but will it*, read *but it will*

11, — 13, instead of *developes*, read *develops*

15, — 4, instead of *ff*, read *off*

15, — 18, instead of *whose is mind*, read *whose mind*  
*is*

23, — 1, instead of *to confer, on him*, read *to confer*  
*on him*

38, — 13, instead of *pierces*, read *pierce*

41, — 7, instead of *if Religion*, read *Irreligion*

41, — 18, instead of *Bless*, read *Bliss*

43, — 14, instead of *are*, read *is*

49 — 4, instead of *or*, read *nor*

65 — 6, instead of *that, and*, read *and that*

68 — 12, instead of *implied*, read *implicit*

73 — 4, instead of *baseless*, read *empty*

85 — 16, instead of *have adopted*, read *have not*  
*adopted.*



